

TRANSGENDER/THIRD GENDER/ TRANSSEXUALISM

"We are a movement of masculine females and feminine males, cross-dressers, transsexual men and women, intersexuals born on the anatomical sweep between female and male, gender-blenders, many other sex and gender-variant people, and our significant others. All told, we expand understanding of how many ways there are to be a human being." (Feinberg, 1998, p. 5)

These words, written by prominent transgender activist and writer Leslie Feinberg, mark a significant moment in the history both of the word "transgender" and the movement for and about which it speaks. Susan Stryker, a transgender scholar, filmmaker, and activist, attributes the origin of the use of "transgender" as an umbrella term to Feinberg's 1992 pamphlet, *Transgender Liberation: A Movement Whose Time Has Come*. Stryker writes,

"Transgender, in this sense, was a 'pangender' umbrella term for an imagined community encompassing transsexuals, drag queens, butches, hermaphrodites, cross-dressers, masculine women, effeminate men, sissies, tomboys, and anybody else willing to be interpolated by the term, who felt compelled to answer the call to mobilization." (2006, p. 4)

Stryker also forges a link between Feinberg's 1992 pamphlet and Sandy Stone's watershed article "The

Empire Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto," published in 1991, writing, "To a significant degree, Feinberg's 'transgender' came to name the ensemble of critical practices called for by Stone's 'posttranssexual manifesto'" (2006, p. 4).

Prior to this time, the word "transgender" had been used to refer to individuals whose identities fell somewhere on a spectrum between "transvestite" and "transsexual." Stryker explains, "If a *transvestite* was somebody who episodically changed into the clothes of the so-called 'other sex,' and a *transsexual* was somebody who permanently changed genitals in order to claim membership in a gender other than the one assigned at birth, then a *transgender* was somebody who permanently changed social gender through the public presentation of self, without recourse to genital transformation" (2006, p. 4). David Valentine, author of *Imagining Transgender: An Ethnography of a Category*, writes that "the idea of transgender as a radical alternative or as a 'third way' between transexuality and transvestism, both of which developed through the previous two decades, was quickly overtaken in the early 1990s by a third usage of transgender as a *collective* (often spoken of as a *spectrum* or *umbrella*), inclusive of all and any gender variance" (2007, p. 33). Valentine also casts Feinberg's 1992 pamphlet as "among the first published uses of the collective form of transgender which explicitly politicized transgender identification beyond

individual radical acts and called for a social movement organized around its terms" (2007, p. 33).

The publication of Feinberg's and Stone's pieces, then, help to establish the early 1990s as an important moment for the mobilization of the term "transgender." In tandem with these publications, grassroots activism and transgender politics were also taking hold. For example, in 1991, debates about transgender inclusion occurred in the wake of the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival's exclusion of a postoperative transsexual woman from participation in the yearly event.

Transgender Nation, an offshoot of the San Francisco chapter of Queer Nation, began in 1992; part of their early work included organizing against the inclusion of "gender identity disorder" in the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* (see Stryker, 1994, and Spade, 2006). In Nebraska in 1993, Brandon Teena was brutally raped and murdered for transgressing gender boundaries. Kate Bornstein, a transgender performance artist, activist, and author was also active during the early 1990s, and her book, *Gender Outlaw: On Men, Women and the Rest of Us*, was published in 1994. These are some of the events of the early 1990s that, along with Feinberg's and Stone's published pieces, helped shape and organize transgender politics and establish transgender studies.

By the mid-1990s, the growing use of the word "transgender" as a preferred umbrella term to classify numerous identities had been established. Susan Stryker reflects, "Perhaps the most surprising aspect of the whole transgender thing back in the 1990s was the startling rapidity with which the term itself took root, and was applied to (if not always welcomed by) the sociocultural and critical-intellectual formations that were caught up in, or suddenly crystallized by, its wake" (2006, p. 2). She writes that "transgender" has become the term of choice "for a wide range of phenomena that call attention to the fact that 'gender,' as it is lived, embodied, experienced, performed, and encountered, is more complex and varied than can be accounted for by the currently dominant binary sex/gender ideology of Eurocentric modernity" (2006, p. 3). Valentine similarly

points out that "particularly in the mid-1990s, 'transgender' has become ubiquitous in progressive community-based organizations, identity-based political movements, popular media accounts, international human rights discourses, academic debates, anthropological descriptions of gender variance cross-culturally, and, astonishingly, it is even finding its way into the medical establishment, the very institution to which transgender was originally opposed" (2007, pp. 33–34). Significantly, Valentine notes that many of the participants in his study did not identify themselves as transgender (2007, p. 3). The self-appellation of the term "transgender" was, and remains, uneven by those often categorized as "transgender" by others.

Although there is widespread agreement that the term "transgender" rose to prominence in the early and mid-1990s, definitions of the term—articulations of who exactly falls under such an "umbrella"—demonstrate some significant variations. Valentine writes, "The very flexibility of transgender, its strength as a tool of political organizing, thus makes it possible to use without specifying who is being invoked in particular instances" (2007, p. 39). Viviane K. Namaste writes, "A variety of different identities are included within the 'transgender' label: cross-dressers, or individuals who wear the clothes associated with the 'opposite' sex, often for erotic gratification; drag queens, or men who usually live and identify as gay men, but who perform as female impersonators in gay male bars and leisure spaces; and transsexuals, or individuals who take hormones and who may undergo surgery to align their biological sexes with their genders" (2000, p. 273). Joanne Meyerowitz (2002) provides a different listing, writing, "'Transgendered' includes, among others, some people who identify as 'butch' or masculine lesbians, as 'fairies,' 'queens,' or feminine gay men, and as heterosexual cross-dressers as well as those who identify as transsexual." She continues to point out, "The categories are not hermetically sealed, and to a certain extent the boundaries are permeable" (2002, p. 10). Although there is a degree of variation in the lists by Namaste and Meyerowitz, and indeed others, Valentine points out that the minimal definition includes

transsexuals and, usually, (male) transvestites (2007, p. 39). He also writes that the flexibility of the term “transgender” “enables one group—frequently transsexuals—to stand in for others while giving the impression of collectivity” (2007, p. 40). Despite these remarks, which posit a close connection, at times to the point of slippage, between the categories of “transgender” and “transsexual,” the relationship between the two is far more fraught.

In fact, whether or not transsexuals are included or choose to include themselves in the category is a point of debate and contention. Stryker, in her introductory article to the *GLQ* Transgender Issue, writes, “In this introduction, I use transgender not to refer to one particular identity or way of being embodied but rather as an umbrella term for a wide variety of bodily effects that disrupt or denaturalize heteronormatively constructed linkages between an individual’s anatomy at birth, a nonconsensually assigned gender category, psychical identifications with sexed body images and/or gendered subject positions, and the performance of specifically gendered social, sexual, or kinship functions” (1998, p. 149). She continues, “I realize that in doing so, and by including transsexuality... within the transgender rubric, I am already taking a position in the debate about how these terms interrelate” (1998, p. 149).

Vivian K. Namaste, Jay Prosser, and Henry Rubin are some of the most prominent scholars to address tensions between the categories of “transgender” and “transsexual.” All of these authors call attention to a consistent erasure of transsexuals in many discussions about and uses of the term “transgender.” They also critique the hierarchy that is often established—both implicitly and explicitly—by some feminist and queer theorists and theories where transgender is a privileged site of queerness over and against transsexuals’ lives, bodies, specificity, and subjectivity. In *Invisible Lives: The Erasure of Transsexual and Transgendered People*, Namaste writes, “While the term ‘transgender’ has entered into public discourse within certain Anglo-American academic and activist contexts, its use is challenged by transsexuals” (2000, p. 61). Citing works by Margaret Deirdre O’Hartigan (1997), Max Valerio (1997), and Mirha

Soleil-Ross (1997), Namaste writes that “these writers ask important questions about the use and definition of the term ‘transgender,’ inquiring about the extent to which it erases transsexual specificity” (2000, p. 62). She continues, “It is especially important to cite transsexuals (and transsexuals who refuse to call themselves ‘transgendered’) given that the objections they raise rarely circulate within established lesbian and gay communities” (2000, p. 62). In *Sex Change/Social Change*, Namaste writes,

“Yes, we can state that we are not men and not women when all is well in the world. But would someone please tell me how to get an apartment when one is neither a man nor a woman? Where does one find a physician to treat neither men nor women? And an employer? My point is that this *transgendered* discourse is utopic, and one profoundly informed by privilege: it assumes that one already has a job, housing, and access to health care.” (2005, p. 22 [emphasis added])

Henry Rubin points out that “transsexuals thus often continue to be disparaged even while *transgenderers*—an umbrella term meant to represent a range of queer genders such as drag queens, cross-dressers, butches, and trannies who do not pursue all or any of the surgical/hormonal options—are celebrated” (1998, p. 276). Jay Prosser succinctly writes, “There is much about transsexuality that must remain irreconcilable to queer” (1998, p. 59). He elaborates, “the specificity of transsexual experience; the importance of the flesh to self; the difference between sex and gender identity; the desire to pass as ‘real-ly-gendered’ in the world without trouble” (1998, p. 59).

As the passages quoted above begin to demonstrate, the at-times-fraught relations between “transgender” and “transsexual” is part of another set of tensions between “transgender/transsexual” and “queer,” as the latter is deployed in queer theory and politics. The relationships between and interconnectedness of the categories “transsexual,” “transgender,” and “queer” are not always clear and are themselves sometimes as contingent, flexible, and amorphous as the categories and real lives they are deployed to contain. Sometimes “transgender” and “transsexual” may be used as synonyms in opposition to “queer,” but sometimes

“transgender” and “queer” are aligned in opposition to “transsexual” (see Halberstam, 1998, p. 291, and Stryker, 1998, p. 149). The alignment between “queer” and “transgender” is open to substantial critique, according to Namaste, Prosser, and Rubin, as well as others, when it results in the privileging of transgender subjects and bodies over and against transsexual ones. In such instances, transsexuals are not erased but dismissed and characterized as “gender conservatives” (Elliot, 2010, p. 37). Rubin notes,

“At the same time that ‘queer’ signifies one condition for articulating a radical trans agenda, it also represents an opportunity for the appropriation of transsexuals by nontranssexual queers. Trans phenomena are the new queer chic; our lives have been appropriated to demonstrate the theories of gender performativity, but only to the extent that they fail to reproduce the normative correspondence between body morphology and gender identity assumed as a matter of course by nontranssexuals.” (1998, pp. 275–276)

He further writes, “Queer appropriations and the new movement among some transgenders to resignify themselves in a queer register carry an implicit critique of transsexuals who choose not to queer their identities. These more traditional transsexuals (is that an oxymoron?) choose to ‘play it straight’—to pass, to assimilate” (1998, p. 276).

In *Debates in Transgender, Queer, and Feminist Theory: Contested Sites*, Patricia Elliot (2010) provides a useful survey and engaging analysis of the debates about the accuracy of a transgender rubric that professes to include transsexuals. In her section titled “The Transgender/Queer Perspective,” Elliot identifies some of the key figures of this debate as “radical transsexuals Sandy Stone, Kate Bornstein, and Riki Wilchins, as well as transgender theorist Judith Halberstam and non-trans queer theorist Judith Butler” (2010, p. 41). Riki Wilchins is the author of *Read My Lips: Sexual Subversion and the End of Gender* (1997) and co-editor, along with Joan Nestle and Claire Howell, of *Gender Queer: Voices beyond the Sexual Binary* (2002); she is also a founding member of Camp Trans, the Transsexual Menace, and the Gender Policy Action Committee (GenderPAC). Halberstam’s work on the “border wars” between (transgender)

butch and FTM identities includes “F2M: The Making of Female Masculinity” (1994) and *Female Masculinity* (1998). Butler’s influential works include *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990), *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of “Sex”* (1993), and *Undoing Gender*, particularly the chapter “Undiagnosing Gender” (2004).

Susan Stryker in her 1998 article also sees the possibility of a successful alliance among transgender, transsexual, and queer categories, writing, “I want to suggest in this essay that *transgender* can in fact be read as a heterodox interpretation of *queer*. . . . Transsexuality, by extension, can also be queer” (1998, p. 149). However, some years later, she seems less optimistic. Writing “I wanted to help define ‘queer’ as a family to which transsexuals belonged,” here she characterizes this aspiration as a largely unfulfilled vision that nevertheless still takes her breath away (2004, p. 213). She further writes,

“Queer theory has become an entrenched, though generally progressive, presence in higher education, but it has not realized the (admittedly utopian) potential I (perhaps naively) sensed there for a radical restructuring of our understanding of gender, particularly of minoritized and marginalized manifestations of gender, such as transsexuality. While queer studies remains the most hospitable place to undertake transgender work, all too often queer remains a codeword for ‘gay’ or ‘lesbian,’ and all too often transgender phenomena are misapprehended through a lens that privileges sexual orientation and sexual identity as the primary means of differing from heteronormativity.” (2004, pp. 213–214)

Stryker writes that “the field of transgender studies has taken shape in the shadow of queer theory.” She points out, however, that “transgender studies is following its own trajectory and has the potential to address emerging problems in the critical study of gender and sexuality, identity, embodiment, and desire in ways that gay, lesbian, and queer studies have not always successfully managed” (2004, p. 215). In this article, Stryker refers to transgender studies as queer theory’s “evil twin,” and we do well to remember their coterminous conceptions and births. To consider trans phenomena “the new queer

chic,” as seen in the passage by Rubin quoted above, demonstrates the failure to recognize and take seriously that both terms, “queer” and “transgender,” were deployed in the early 1990s (Stryker, 2006, p. 7; Valentine, 2007, p. 24). The reasons behind the relative success, establishment, institutionalization, and entrenchment of queer theory and queer studies relative to the “newness” of transgender theory and transgender studies in academic settings need to be interrogated.

Transgender Studies. The publication of *The Transgender Studies Reader*, edited by Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle, in 2006 marks an important step toward the establishment and institutionalization of transgender studies in academic settings. The compilation’s chronological scope reaches back to the nineteenth century, with the inclusion of a selection from Richard von Krafft-Ebing’s *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1877); the book also contains selections from Magnus Hirschfeld’s *The Transvestites* (1910) and David Cauldwell’s *Psychopathia Transexualis* (1949). In the prefatory remarks to Cauldwell’s selection, Whittle and Stryker make note of a historical shift in “transgender phenomena,” writing that “Prior to the spectacular publicity given to male-to-female transgender Christine Jorgensen in 1952, most medical and media attention was focused on female-to-male individuals” (2006, p. 40). *The Transgender Studies Reader* also includes the mid-twentieth-century publications of Harry Benjamin, Robert Stoller, and Harold Garfinkel. By incorporating such works at the outset, *The Transgender Studies Reader* successfully charts the shift, encapsulating the evolution from the study of “transgender phenomena” or “studies of transgenderism” to transgender studies. In the former, “transgenderism” is spoken about or studied from a nontransgender, presumably “normative,” position. In the latter, positions of “normativity” are themselves brought into question and critiqued, and transgender/transsexual people speak from their positions as knowing subjects. Stryker writes, “Transgender Studies begins with performatively authorized transgender speaking and subject positions, in dialog with other voices” (2011, p. 13).

In her introductory article to *The Transgender Studies Reader*, Stryker defines transgender studies, writing, “Transgender studies, as we understand

it, is the academic field that claims as its purview transsexuality and cross-dressing, some aspects of intersexuality and homosexuality, cross-cultural and historical investigations of human gender diversity, myriad subcultural expressions of ‘gender atypicality,’ theories of sexed embodiment and subjective gender identity development, law and public policy related to the regulation of gender expression, and many other similar issues” (2006, p. 3). She writes,

“Most broadly conceived, the field of transgender studies is concerned with anything that disrupts, denaturalizes, rearticulates, and makes visible the normative linkages we generally assume to exist between the biological specificity of the sexually differentiated human body, the social roles and statuses that a particular form of body is expected to occupy, the subjectively experienced relationship between a gendered sense of self and social expectations of gender-role performance, and the cultural mechanisms that work to sustain or thwart specific configurations of gendered personhood.” (2006, p. 3)

And finally,

“Transgender studies, at its best, is like other socially engaged interdisciplinary academic fields such as disability studies or critical race theory that investigate questions of embodied difference, and analyze how such differences are transformed into social hierarchies—without ever losing sight of the fact that ‘difference’ and ‘hierarchy’ are never mere abstractions; they are systems of power that operate on actual bodies, capable of producing pain and pleasure, health and sickness, punishment and reward, life and death.” (2006, p. 3)

The Transgender Studies Reader is divided into subsections, and these sections work to map the terrain of the field during its formation as articulated from the 1990s to the mid-2000s. Following the first section on “Sex, Gender, and Science,” which contains the early articles on the study of “transgenderism” mentioned above, the next section is titled “Feminist Investments.” This section includes the early “feminist” critique and derision of transsexuals in an excerpt from Janice Raymond’s infamous *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-Male* (1979). Yet this excerpt is contextualized by the editors’ inclusion of Carol

Riddell's pamphlet *Divided Sisterhood: A Critical Review of Janice Raymond's *The Transsexual Empire**, published within a year of the book, as well as Sandy Stone's "The Empire Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto." Stryker and Whittle write in their preface to Raymond's excerpt, "Paradoxically, because it provoked such an outraged, anguished, and deeply motivated counter-response from transgender people, it also did more than any other work to elicit the new lines of critique that coalesced into transgender studies." They further write, "As will be seen throughout some of the articles in this anthology, Raymond provided the impetus for many transsexuals to begin theorizing their own lives, and asking whether they could ever claim the name 'feminist'" (2006, p. 131).

The Transgender Studies Reader then proceeds to present sections on "Queering Gender," wherein some of the investigations into the "transsexual/transgender" rift discussed above are included; the volume continues with other sections on "Selves: Identity and Community," "Transgender Masculinities," "Embodiment: Ethics in Time and Space," and finally "Multiple Crossings: Gender, Nationality, Race." This last section includes articles that critically examine U.S.- and Euro-centric assumptions in transgender theorizing, question the applicability of the categories of "transgender" and "transsexual" in cross-cultural (non-Western) settings, and challenge pervasive racism and ethnocentrism in the field. Thus, Katrina Roen, in her piece "Transgender Theory and Embodiment: The Risk of Racial Marginalization," asks, "Where are people of racial 'minorities' situated in queer and transgender theories? Despite the claims of inclusiveness of both transgender and queer writings, do perspectives of whiteness continue to resonate, largely unacknowledged, through transgender and queer theorising?" (Roen, 2006, p. 656). She also asks, "How might investing in aspects of current transgender discourse amount to complicity with the colonising culture of which medical discourses are only a small part? How can transgender theorising be critical of its own racialised politics in a way that is productive for those who place race first and gender second?" (Roen, 2006, p. 664). In their article "Romancing the Transgender

Native: Rethinking the Use of the 'Third Gender' Concept," Evan B. Towle and Lynn M. Morgan write, "Despite our commitment to the value of ethnographic comparison, we are skeptical of the utility of the generic transgender native in the popular literature. Understanding of other cultures is not enhanced by broad, decontextualized transcultural surveys or by accounts that encourage readers to take cultural features out of context" (Towle and Morgan, 2006, p. 668). They quote David Valentine: "If... 'transgender' has a specific history and set of meanings which implicitly mark it in terms of its difference from USAmerican understandings of 'gay,' then labeling *bantut* [Philippines] or *travesti* [Brazil] as 'transgender' is just as problematic" (Towle and Morgan, 2006, p. 669). In Emi Koyama's article, "Whose Feminism Is It Anyway? The Unspoken Racism of the Trans Inclusion Debate," Koyama writes about the debates surrounding the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, "I have become increasingly alarmed in the recent months by the pattern of 'debate' between white middle-class women who run 'women's communities' and white middle-class trans activists who run trans movement. It is about time someone challenged the unspoken racism, which this whole discourse is founded upon" (Koyama, 2006, pp. 698–699). Helen Hok-Sze Leung, in "Unsung Heroes: Reading Transgender Subjectivities in Hong Kong Action Cinema," writes, "More recently, there is increasing recognition that more research on transgender phenomena outside of the Euro-American context is needed. This is the result of an anxiety in the field that the notion of 'transgender' itself may be in danger of reifying into an exclusionary narrative that is rooted only in the experiences of Europeans and North Americans" (Leung, 2006, p. 686). Such concerns are also raised in Stryker's introductory article, where she succinctly writes, "It is far too easy to assimilate non-Western configurations of personhood into Western constructs of sexuality and gender in a manner that recapitulates the power structures of colonialism. 'Transgender' is, without a doubt, a category of First World origin that is currently being exported for Third World consumption" (Stryker and Whittle, 2006, p. 14).

Other edited volumes that explore transgender in cross-cultural perspective include *Female Desires: Same-Sex Relations and Transgender Practices Across Cultures*, edited by Evelyn Blackwood and Saskia Wieringa; *Third Sex, Third Gender: Beyond Sexual Dimorphism in Culture and History*, edited by Gilbert Herdt; *Gender Reversals and Gender Cultures: Anthropological and Historical Perspectives*, edited by Sabrina Ramet; and *Body Guards: The Cultural Politics of Gender Ambiguity*, edited by Julia Epstein and Kristina Straub. The cross-cultural and historical applicability of the terms “transgender” and “transsexual” remains a subject of debate. Some—for example, Kate Bornstein in *Gender Outlaws* (1994, p. 143) and Leslie Feinberg in *Transgender Warriors* (1997)—claim “transcestors” reaching far back through history. There is undeniable power in the assertion of historical precedent and presence: if other cultures at other historical or contemporary moments have valued more flexible conceptions of genders, gender identities, and gender expressions, then there is hope that gender can be thought—imagined and inhabited—differently. However, in addition to the criticisms of this admittedly appealing and powerful strategy articulated by Towle and Morgan (2006), others would question this endeavor on social constructionist grounds. As Valentine writes, “From this [social constructionist] viewpoint, to imagine historical subjects as ‘gay,’ ‘lesbian,’ or as ‘transgender’ ignores the radically different understandings of self and the contexts that underpinned the practices and lives of historical subjects” (2007, p. 30). Thus the debates over essentialist versus constructionist approaches seen previously in the context of both gender (male/female) and sexuality (gay/straight) binaries exist in the context of transgender historicizing as well.

New Terminologies. In a review of *The Transgender Studies Reader*, Brice Smith observes that in Whittle’s foreword he “never uses the word ‘transgender,’ opting instead for ‘trans’” (2008, p. 318). Smith continues, “Whittle’s preference for ‘trans’ suggests that ‘transgender’ is already dated and anticipates an evolution in transgender studies” (2008, p. 318). It is hard not to see some of the motivation behind this

more recent shift from “transgender” to “trans” as a way to mitigate the erasure of transsexuals that often accompanied the use of the term “transgender” discussed above. Whittle writes, “The word ‘trans,’ referring to a ‘trans woman’ or ‘trans man’ (of whatever subtype of trans identity) is a very recent take on the umbrella term ‘transgender’” (p. xi). He continues, “‘Trans’ as a stand-alone term did not come into formal usage until it was coined by a parliamentary discussion group in London in 1998, with the deliberate intention of being as inclusive as possible when negotiating equality legislation” (p. xi). And Whittle points out, “We see new language being developed constantly; for example ‘per’ as a pronoun was developed by U.K. community members with nonexistent gender identities, and similarly the U.S. term ‘hir’ for those who have both” (pp. xi–xii). In the United States one might also find “ze” or “zie” as an alternative to he or she as well as “hir” as an alternative to his or her. More recently, “trans*” is being used to signal this term’s openness and inclusion and differentiate it from “trans,” which is now more often used for trans men and trans women. Transgendered, with the appended “ed,” is considered offensive to many trans and transgender people. Along with “trans,” “transsexual,” and “transgender,” one will also encounter “cis,” “cissexual,” and “cigender.” “Cis-” is derived from the Latin prefix *cis-*, which means “on this side of,” in contrast with *trans*, connoting “on the other side of.” Cissexual and cigender are at times being used instead of “nontrans.” Emi Koyama explains that the terms originate from trans activists “who wanted to turn the table and define the words that describe non-transsexuals and non-transgenders rather than always being defined and described by them” (2013; see also Serano, 2007, and Enke, 2013).

Future Directions. Just two years after Whittle’s foreword to *The Transgender Studies Reader*, *Women’s Studies Quarterly* published its 2008 issue with the title “Trans-.” Susan Stryker, Paisley Currah, and Lisa Jean Moore’s introductory essay “Introduction: Trans-, Trans, or Transgender?” reflects on these different terms, ultimately opting for the less nominalistic and more relational term “trans-” to further open the field of transgender studies and expand its horizons.

Instead of thinking of the “trans” in transgender as a horizontal movement between two fixed gendered spaces, “man” and “woman,” Stryker, Currah, and Moore propose thinking instead of “‘trans-’ along a vertical axis, one that moves between the concrete biomateriality of individual living bodies and the biopolitical realm of aggregate populations that serve as resource for sovereign power.... ‘Trans-’ thus becomes the capillary space of connection and circulation between the macro- and micro-political registers through which the lives of bodies become enmeshed in the lives of nations, states, and capital-formations, while ‘-gender’ becomes one of several sets of variable techniques or temporal practices (such as race or class) through which bodies are made to live” (Stryker et al., 2008, pp. 13–14). The authors also write, “Those of us schooled in the humanities and social sciences have become familiar, over the past twenty years or so, with queering things: how might we likewise begin to critically trans- our world?” (2008, p. 13). “Transing” is then described by the authors as “a practice that assembles gender into contingent structures of association with other attributes of bodily being, and that allows for their reassembly” (2008, p. 13). In this “Trans-” volume of *Women’s Studies Quarterly*, Stryker, Currah, and Moore assemble “work that situates ‘trans-’ in relation to transgender yet moves beyond the narrow politics of gender identity” (2008, p. 15).

The recently published *Transgender Studies Reader 2* (2013) forefronts this broader conception of trans (gender) work. Along with sections on “Transfeminism” and “Timely Matters: Temporality and Trans-Historicity,” both themes that have related sections in the earlier *Transgender Studies Reader*, one finds sections on “Making Trans-Culture(s): Texts, Performances, Artifacts,” “Radical Political Economy,” and “Transsexing Humankind.” There is an increased focus on trans critiques of biopolitics, surveillance, neoliberal economies, and social policies. There is a broader geographic range covered as “the field of transgender studies is moving strongly in transnational directions” (Stryker and Aizura, 2013, p. 8). Editors Susan Stryker and Aren Z. Aizura write, “The field of transgender studies has grown with unexpected speed to unanticipated dimensions over the

past few years; if the near future resembles the recent past, we can scarcely imagine what a *Transgender Studies Reader 3* might look like” (2013, p. 12). Readers interested in transgender studies and its future manifestations, while looking forward to the publication of a third reader, are now able to learn about, and participate in, such work in the academic journal *TSQ: The Transgender Quarterly*, published by Duke University Press as of May 2014.

[See also Gender; Intersectional Studies; and Queer Theory.]

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